

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE 13WASHINGTON WEEKLY
1 MAY 1979P-L of ton John
CIAI-01 Turner, Adm.
ORGI SALT

Turner Throws Carter An Anvil

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Managing Editor Washington Weekly

CIA Director Stansfield Turner last week threw Jimmy Carter an anvil when what the President desperately needed was a life preserver.

On Tuesday, the *New York Times* front-paged a story which reported that Turner has told the Senate that it will take until 1984 for the U.S. to fully restore the intelligence capability for monitoring Soviet missile tests and development that was lost with the shutdown of two electronic listening posts in Iran. One of these posts, our base at Kabkan, was especially valuable since it was only 600 miles from the main Soviet missile-testing launching site.

The *Times* quoted a SALT II Senate critic who heard Turner's testimony as saying: "From what we've been told, the United States would only be completely back in business one year before the Treaty is scheduled to run out."

Following the *Times'* Turner story, the Administration began a frantic scramble to explain and clarify what Turner really meant. Defense Secretary Harold Brown issued a statement acknowledging that it would take "about a year" to replace lost Iranian facilities "depending on how fast we can carry out monitoring programs under development." Brown agreed, however, with Turner that it would take until 1983 or 1984 for the U.S. to regain "all" the intelligence capability lost in Iran.

Meanwhile, down at Jekyll Island, Georgia, where the President was vacationing, White House press secretary, Jody Powell, joined the campaign to discredit CIA Director Turner's assessment. Accusing Sen. Jake Garn (R-Utah) of leaking the information to the paper, Powell said the story in the *Times* was "inaccurate" and "distorted." He said that if Garn "worked for the Administration, he no longer would" as a result of the Senator's having allegedly peddled bum dope to the *Times*.

But it looks as if it was Powell who was peddling bum dope to the press about Garn. The White House press secretary subsequently backed off his remarks about Garn saying that he "understood" that the Senator had been the source of the *Times'* information but he didn't mean to imply that he (Powell) knew the origin of the paper's information. (Question: As a result of this, will Powell continue to work for the Administration?)

An *Atlanta Constitution* reporter, Angelo Lewis, quotes a source close to the Senate Intelligence Committee as characterizing the Administration's current position as "hiding behind secrecy." This source says: "What the Administration ought to do is to admit that there are certain things they can verify and others they can't."

In Washington, Sen. Garn says there is nothing the U.S. can do "in either the near or long term" to compensate for the loss of electronic listening posts in Iran, making verification of the new strategic arms limitation treaty with the Soviet Union "an impossible task."

"For the foreseeable future, there is no replacement for the Iranian sites," noted Garn. "Satellites are too far away and the U-2 is not a viable answer because of antennae site limitations, among others. Even if we get a few site for collection, it will take years. By that time, the Soviets will have introduced a new generation of ICBMS," he added.

The Utahn's comments were prompted by what he termed attempts by the Carter Administration and "its SALT sellers" to minimize the impact of the loss of the Iranian listening posts on U.S. monitoring and verification efforts. He has already accused the Administration of leaking information to the *New York Times* on plans to use a modified version of the U-2 to help monitor Soviet missile tests.

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GARN, Jake
(orig under Lofton)